

“STAYED UPON JEHOVAH”

(II Chronicles 26:1-23)

“**STAY UPON THE LORD**, THE Holy One of Israel.” (Isaiah 10:20)

“For they call themselves of the holy city, and **STAY THEMSELVES UPON THE GOD OF ISRAEL.**” (Isaiah 48:2)

“Who is among you that feareth the Lord that obeyeth the voice of his servant that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and **STAY UPON HIS GOD.**” (Isaiah 50:10)

INTRODUCTION

The word “stay” is defined this way:

1. To continue in place
2. To remain in place
3. To endure and last
4. To dwell, reside or halt in place
5. To last the distance in a race

Question: Where is it we are called to “stay”?

Answer: “Upon the Lord”

Fact: Uzziah is one of the greatest illustrations in Scripture, of someone who “stayed upon God” (almost until the very end).

Fact: Uzziah is a picture for us all of what it means to “stay” (and become “unstayed” upon God).

1. Uzziah was chosen by the people to reign after the death of his father (Amaziah).
2. When Solomon died, Israel split into two Kingdoms (the Northern Kingdom called Israel and the Southern Kingdom called Judah).
3. Uzziah took the throne as Judah’s tenth king in 791 B.C.
4. He had the second longest reign of a king (52 years) second only to Manasseh’s 55 years).
5. He ruled during the “golden age” of Judah and Israel (a time of great peace and prosperity).
6. He was so effective in his reforms that Isaiah felt it a calamity when Uzziah died (Isaiah 6).
7. He illustrates what his great-grandfather Solomon meant when he said:

“Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Prov.16:18)

(How Uzziah went from leader to leper because he refused to “Stay upon God”.)

I. The “Fame” of Uzziah (His Deeds)

(Notice Uzziah’s many accomplishments)

1. He restored the key coastal city of Eloth (V. 2)
2. He lived obedient and pleased the Lord (V. 4)
3. He sought the Lord as a teenager and became a great young man of prayer. (V. 5)
4. He defeated the Philistines and rebuilt the cities. (V. 6)

5. He destroyed Israel's long time enemy. (V. 7)
6. He received gifts from the Ammonites. (V. 8)
7. He continually became stronger and stronger. (V. 8)
8. He led the great construction projects in the capital city. (V. 9)
9. He built fortresses to protect the livestock. (V. 10)
10. He became an extensive cattle breeder. (V. 10)
11. He maintained farmers and vine-dressers upon the mountains and in the fields. (V. 10)
12. He organized and armed the great military forces. (V. 11-15)
13. His fame was noised for all to hear:

"His name spread far abroad, for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong." (V. 15)

- ◆ All because he "stayed upon the Lord"
- ◆ All because he lived in the place of prayer
- ◆ All because he leaned upon the Lord
- ◆ All because he listened to instruction
- ◆ All because he stayed low to the ground and gave the glory to God.

(But then a turn in his story)

II. The "Familiarity" of Uzziah (His Danger)

Question: What's the danger of being successful (when all is going well)?

"But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction." (V. 16)

Fact: For all these years Uzziah "stayed upon God"

(But then it happened)

- ◆ Uzziah drifted
- ◆ Uzziah was sifted
- ◆ Uzziah was lifted (of all his privileges)

Question: How does Uzziah reveal what it means to "stay upon God"?

Question: Where did Uzziah go wrong?

Question: What does it mean for you and me to "stay upon the Lord"?

From Uzziah's Life

(To "Stay Upon God" Means Four Things)

#1. To "**Stay Upon God**" means to "**Stay Longing**"

"And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper." (V. 5)

Fact: Uzziah was in pursuit of friendship with God.

Fact: Uzziah was longing after God in prayer.

Fact: Uzziah was marvelously helped by God to lead.

(But then it happened)

1. Uzziah was ensnared by the barrenness of a busy life.

2. Uzziah focused on the external more than the internal.
3. Uzziah drifted from who he was to what he did.
4. Uzziah had his daytimer too full for God.
5. Uzziah allowed his work to squeeze God right out of his heart.

(Results?)

1. Uzziah's branch life became larger than his root system.
2. Uzziah's character didn't keep pace with his accomplishments.
3. Uzziah quit praying and put his heart on cruise control.

(Uzziah #1 – Drifted in his longing after God!)

#2. To **“Stay Upon God”** means to **“Stay Leaning”**

Fact: Uzziah goes into the temple to burn incense (V. 16)

Fact: 80 priests saw what was happening. (V. 17)

Fact: Uzziah is told that the law forbid him to do what only a priest could do.

Fact: But something has happed to Uzziah...

1. Now he isn't content, just to be King.
2. Now he wants to be priest as well.
3. Now he feels he deserves more favors (perks).
4. Now he wants a piece of the action in the temple.
5. Now he is leaning on his past record of successes.

(Uzziah Says)

“Why can't I do what these other 80 do?”

“The 80 priests are no better than I am.”

“I deserve the same privileges of the priests.”

Question: Why is Uzziah discontent and getting out of line?

- ◆ Because, instead of leaning upon God, he begins to lean on past accomplishments.
- ◆ Because, he thinks his past successes qualify him to step out of line (and break the law).

(#2 – Uzziah drifted in his Leaning upon the Lord!)

#3. To **“Stay Upon God”** means to **“Stay Listening”**

Question: What happened to Uzziah when he went into the temple to burn incense?

“And Azariah the priest went in after him with 80 other priests.” (V. 17)

“And they withstood Uzziah the king and said, “What are you doing Uzziah?” (V. 18)

(Caution – Red light – Warning)

- ◆ “What are you doing Uzziah?” ◆ “You're heading in the wrong direction”
- ◆ “Why are you messing with danger?” ◆ “Stop now before it's too late.”

Question: How did Uzziah respond to correction and reproof?

Question: How did he react to those who loved him enough to warn him?

“Then Uzziah was enraged.” (V. 19)

Fact: Uzziah became angry!

Fact: Uzziah would not be corrected and instructed.

Fact: Uzziah refused to step back and listen.

Fact: Uzziah wouldn't allow himself to be detoured from coming danger.

Fact: Uzziah reacted in a carnal way when 80 priests looked him square in the eye and said, “Stop, you're going in the wrong direction.”

(#3 – Uzziah drifted in his Listening to Correction)

#4. To **“Stay Upon God”** means to **“Stay Low”**

“His heart was lifted up to his destruction.” (V. 16)

Fact: Pride thought it was too good for the Law.

Fact: Pride thought it could bypass the stop sign.

Fact: Pride thought it deserved special privileges.

Fact: Pride exalted itself and displayed itself.

Fact: Pride just rested on its past victories.

Fact: Pride thought itself more highly than it ought to think.

Question: How could this man start so well yet end so poorly?

Question: How could Uzziah begin in prayer yet end up in such transgression?

1. His heart became cold in prayer.
2. His heart became full of pride.
3. His heart became angry and resentful of correction and reproof.

#4 – Uzziah drifted in his “Staying Low”)

III. The “Fall” Of Uzziah (His Disaster)

(Humpty Dumpty had a great fall)

Question: What happened to the king because he refused to “Stay Upon God”?

1. He Was Diseased (V. 19)

- ◆ God smote him with leprosy
- ◆ Uzziah became a reproach to even look upon.

2. He Was Dismissed (V. 20)

- ◆ Uzziah was thrust out of the temple
- ◆ He lived as a hermit in isolation

3. He Was Demoted (V. 21)

- ◆ Uzziah was placed in a “several house” (separated)

- ◆ He was cut off from worshipping in the temple ever again.

4. He Was Disgraced (V. 23)

- ◆ Uzziah wasn't even allowed burial with the other kings.
- ◆ He was buried "near them in a field".

(Why the great fall from grace?)
One Reason!

Uzziah didn't "**Stay upon the Lord**"

1. He drifted in his **longing** after God.
2. He drifted in his **leaning** upon the Lord.
3. He drifted in his **listening** to correction.
4. He drifted in his **laying low** within his own heart.

(From this)

"And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." (V. 4)

(To this)

"His heart was lifted up to his destruction." (V. 16)

Remember Some Absolutes

- #1. Sin that is destroyed in our minds will not become a part of our history.
- #2. Sin will cause you to do things that you thought you would never do.
- #3. The unclean vessel will altogether taint the wine poured into it.
- #4. Long after people forget what you said, they will remember how you lived.
- #5. If we lie low to the ground, we won't have far to fall!

P.S. "**As long as he sought the Lord...**" still remains the #1 **priority** and **protection** for all who believe!!!

AMEN
Bill Kirk